

Message Text

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EXDIS

PASS PM/DCA FOR ARIETTI FROM BARTHOLOMEW

EO 11652: X-GDS1
TAGS: PARM XO UR
SUBJECT: US-SOVIET INDIAN OCEAN WORKING GROUP

1. FOLLOWING NOTES ARE TO HELP YOU IN PREPARATION OF
PRESIDENT'S EVENING READING ON US-SOVIET INDIAN OCEAN
DISCUSSIONS.

2. IN THREE DAYS OF MEETINGS ON INDIAN OCEAN ARMS
LIMITATIONS, THE SOVIETS HAVE GIVEN US THE OUTLINES
OF A TOUGH NEGOTIATING POSITION. IT IS EVIDENT
THEY HAVE THOUGHT THROUGH THE PROBLEM, AND ARE SEEK-
ING A BROAD SET OF OBJECTIVES INCLUDING RESTRIC-
TIONS ON US STRATEGIC FORCES (BOMBERS AND SSBNS)
IN THE REGION. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY HAVE
TAKEN A NON-POLEMICAL TONE AND HAVE PASSED UP OP-
PORTUNITIES TO MAKE PROPAGANDA POINTS THEY HAVE
PRESSED IN EARLIER PUBLIC STATEMENTS.

3. INITIAL SOVIET PRESENTATION JUNE 22 PUT DOWN
MARKERS FOR TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE FORCES AND BASES OF
OUR ALLIES IN ANY AGREEMENT (IN NEGOTIATING TERMS,
THIS PROBABLY MEANS THEY WANT COMPENSATION IN THE
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FORM OF HIGHER LIMITS); DEFINING THE AREA IN A
WAY THAT TAKES ACCOUNT OF US FACILITIES IN ADJACENT
AREAS (E.G. THE PHILIPPINES); CONCENTRATING FIRST
ON BASES AND FACILITIES, I.E., WE AGREE TO DISMANTLE
DIEGO GARCIA, THEN WE CAN TALK ABOUT SHIPS; AND ELIMI-
NATING ALTOGETHER CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF DEPLOYMENTS,
NOTABLY SSBNS AND AIRCRAFT CARRIERS.

4. PURSUING THE GUIDANCE YOU GAVE US LAST WEEK, US DELEGATION STATED OUR OBJECTIVE TO BE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROCESS LEADING FIRST TO STABILIZING THE SITUATION AT PRESENT LEVELS. IF THAT SUCCEEDS, WE CAN MOVE ON TO CONSIDER REDUCTIONS. WE HAVE TOLD SOVIETS CLEARLY THAT ANY AGREEMENT WILL AFFECT ONLY US AND SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN; THAT WE ARE WILLING TO DISCUSS MUTUAL LIMITS ON THAT PRESENCE; BUT THAT WE NOT NOT PREPARED TO BAN SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES IN THE OCEAN (E.G., SSNBS OR CARRIERS), DISCUSS OUR MILITARY FACILITIES OUTSIDE THE OCEAN IN THIS CONTEXT, OR TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE FORCES OF OTHER COUNTRIES IN AGREEING TO MUTUAL LIMITATIONS.

5. SOVIETS USED PLENARY MEETING JUNE 24 TO DEVELOP FURTHER THEIR DEMAND FOR LIMITS ON US STRATEGIC SYSTEMS AND CARRIERS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, SAYING THAT US CLEARLY SAW AREA IN TERMS OF STRATEGIC WEAPONS DEPLOYMENTS AS EVIDENCED BY EXPANSION OF US & ALLIED FACILITIES WHICH COULD BECOME, E.G., SYSTEM FOR DEPLOYMENT OF SSBNS. THEY ASSERTED THAT NO AGREEMENT WOULD BE POSSIBLE IF IT LEFT US FREE TO BUILD UP STRATEGIC FORCES AND SUPPORT FACILITIES IN THE OCEAN. IT SEEMS CLEAR THEY DESIGNED THEIR APPROACH TO THESE
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MEETINGS TO BUILD UP TO THIS CENTRAL THESIS, WHICH THEY IDENTIFIED REPEATEDLY JUNE 24 AS THE "CORE" OF THE INDIAN OCEAN ARMS LIMITATION ISSUE.

6. IN AN INFORMAL SESSION JUNE 23 THE SOVIETS PROPOSED THAT WE EXCHANGE DATA ON SHIP PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN DURING 1976, IN A MATRIX THAT WOULD SHOW BOTH PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY DEPLOYMENTS FOR COMBATANTS AND AUXILLIARY VESSELS. WE HAVE TOLD THEM WE WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE DEFINITIONS THEY USED IN DEVELOPING THEIR NUMBERS BEFORE WE CAN PUT TOGETHER DATA ON A PARALLEL BASIS. IT APPEARS THAT SOME PROGRESS MAY BE POSSIBLE HERE. THEY AGREED TO CONSIDER OUR PORPOSAL FOR NOTIFICATION OF SHIP MOVEMENTS IN AND OUT OF THE OCEAN, PROFESSING TO SEE THIS MOVE AS A PRACTICAL MATTER RATHER THAN A POLITICAL QUESTION.

8. THE SOVIETS HAD NO PROBLEM AGREEING WITH US ON THE NEED TO KEEP OUR TALKS CONFIDENTIAL, AND RESTRICTED TO BILATERAL PARTICIPATION. ON DEFINITION OF THE AREA, SOVIETS PROPOSED TO INCLUDE MORE WATERS

SURROUNDING AUSTRALIA THAN WE HAD SUGGESTED.

9. DELEGATION HAS MADE CLEAR TO THE SOVIETS THAT WE REGARD MANY OF THEIR POINTS AS STAKING OUT AN OPENING POSITION AND THAT FLEXIBILITY WILL BE REQUIRED AS THE PROCESS PROCEEDS. THE SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE MENDELEVICH HAS NOT QUARRELED WITH THIS AND PROFESSES TO BE READY TO SHOW "FLEXIBILITY" AND OPEN-MINDEDNESS IN THE TALKS.
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